





*The Register*  
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*The Register* is published twice a year by the students of Boston Latin School. Students in Classes I through VI are invited to submit original writing and artwork. Pieces are selected by the Editorial Board of *The Register* on the basis of quality, not name recognition; the writers of all pieces remain anonymous to the Editorial Board during the selection process to ensure that all classes are fairly represented and no one is given an unfair advantage.

# The Register

Winter 1999

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## *Symphony*

Who are you to criticize  
A stream of modifiers  
    tripping  
        falteringly  
            haltingly  
                restfully  
on the tongue?  
A group of words and  
    plentiful  
        white space  
making a point known,  
describing a point or  
    maybe  
        a thing of beauty  
        (must not?)  
should not  
be interfered  
    with.  
Let poetry  
    which is written  
        (like this)  
be  
    Be itself;  
and (maybe)  
    though the language is poor  
the idea is good.  
    And it takes effort  
    to see the idea  
    but the idea  
        should be seen.  
and then  
(maybe, only)

then  
the pace  
of the poem  
will increase.  
(what?)  
Will run  
will jog  
or leap  
and fly  
and then  
with emotion  
and feeling  
and thought  
shine  
through the wall  
created  
by intellectual prejudices.

This stream  
    of modifiers  
carefully,  
    thoughtfully  
        placed  
to show some true (vague?)  
    intent  
        should not  
            (must not)  
        be hidden (censured)  
be interfered with,  
be destroyed.

*~William Young, I*



## A Memory

"Hi, Yesica," she said. I turned and smiled at my best friend and reached out to give her a big hug. As I did so, a familiar scent wafted up from her tightly pulled-back hair, it shone with a flowery-smelling hairspray and as I smelled it I was suddenly back, back in the sunny street, back in the sweltering scorching heat, back in the unpaved roads that lifted up great clouds of dust as I padded softly down them in my dusty bare feet.

That morning I could smell the humidity as I lay awake in my grandmother's soft comfortable bed, and I groaned aloud, cursing the hot, humid climate of the Dominican Republic. I rolled over lazily and finally mustered up the strength to get up and make it into the bathroom. When I finally got out, I stood in front of my grandmother's large ornate mahogany mirror and picked up my brush.

"What am I going to do with this frizz?" I wailed.

My grandmother walked into the room and hugged me. "*La bendicion*, Mama," I said, hugging her back.

"*Que Dios*

*te bendiga*," she answered me as we exchanged our daily greetings. "I need you to go down to the colmado and change some of this American money for pesos," she continued, handing me twenty dollars as she walked out of the room. "And it has to be now."

I ran frantically around the room and finally dashed into my mother's room like a charging bull. I halted at the door and spied her bulging suitcase in the farthest corner of the room and within seconds, the tidy room was knee-deep in clothes. I continued to toss out armfuls of clothing until finally I touched bottom and triumphantly pulled out a threepack of Suave hairspray, extra hold, from the depths of my mother's now empty suitcase. I peeled the wrapper off and took one can back to my room with me. In front of the mirror once again, I doused my hair generously with the flowery-scented hairspray, emerging moments later wearing enough hairspray to considerably deplete the ozone layer.

I left my grandmother's house and headed down the dusty road, glancing back warily at the mangy dog sunning itself in front of the white gate. It was early in the morning, and the neighborhood of Sabana Perdida still had



not stirred or rubbed the sleep out of its eyes. I continued down the nearly deserted streets, watching my bare feet kick up clouds of dust that threatened to obscure my view. I smiled and waved back at the elderly woman in multicolored curlers who greeted me as she hung her wash out to dry in the baking sun. I stopped to watch with interest a pair of gurgling, drooling babies who played outside in the dirt as their tired-looking mother chased after them, scolding them good-naturedly in Spanish for getting dirty immediately after taking their baths. The hot sun rose higher in the pale blue sky, and I skipped further down the roads, shoes in hand, bare feet covered with a layer of yellow powder as I called out greetings and smiled and stopped to talk to friends and relatives who had just begun to step out of their small dark houses on their way to the store or to work. The sun shone brighter as I continued past the rows of small houses that bravely repelled the burning heat of the sun. The road was becoming increasingly hotter and was beginning to sting my feet, but I rushed on, not stopping to put on my sandals because there, at the end of the dusty road, was the small store.

I slowed down at the door, aware of a strange obstacle in my path which presented itself in the shape of a hungry looking dog. "It's okay," said the boy at the counter. "He won't bite you. You should know by now that Dominican stray dogs don't bite." His shiny white teeth flashed brightly in his angular face that was as brown as a nut. I smiled back shyly and watched his large expressive green eyes study my face curiously. Suddenly, I remembered the reason I had come, and I wordlessly held out the now crumpled and sweaty twenty American dollars and asked him to change them. As he did so, I turned around and took in my surroundings. There were many large sacks of rice piled on the floor, and an old man was perched upon one of these piles, picking his teeth with a well-used toothpick. Seeing that I was watching him, he smiled at me and his beady eyes flashed as he beckoned. I pulled my eyes away from his dirty face and concentrated on the

rest of the store. There were many nails sticking out of the walls, and on them hung various types of foods. Some held strings of miniature onions, others held long rolls of dried tobacco, and still others held rolls of what turned out to be, upon closer inspection, pork sausages. Behind the counter there were many cans of coffee, each claiming to be the best and the strongest and the richest and the purest, and herbs, medicine, deodorant, rolls of film, oil, and my favorite, jars of penny candy. At length I turned my wandering attention back to the smiling boy behind the counter who counted out my money as he chatted with a new customer who had just entered the store. The light entered through the window that was really only a hole in the wall without a frame, without glass, and was sucked into the cold concrete of the floor. Immense (or so they seemed to me) flies buzzed lazily about the store, settling on the back of the scrawny dog in the doorway and on the rolls of sausages hanging down the walls and on the jars of candy on the counter. I stretched out my sticky sweaty palm to receive the pile of pesos and coins that the boy held out to me. He smiled at me again and told me that he thought I was very beautiful, and I smiled back bashfully, unsure of how to respond, because, after all, he was about sixteen or seventeen, and I was only twelve and painfully shy. "*Gracias*," I said, unsure of whether I was thanking him for the compliment or for the change of money. I turned and stepped over the dog that was curled up into itself, too hot to even brush away the flies that were taking up residence on his back, and I picked up my shoes and stepped out of the door, squinting as the bright sunshine hit me in the face as I tucked the money securely into my pocket and began the walk back towards my grandmother's house, back up the winding streets, back up the dusty roads, watching my bare feet kick up great clouds of dust.

*~Yesica Iris Mirambeaux, II*



## *Jueges and I*

The tears flow freely now dropping into the abyss that is your absence  
your face imprinted here, your blinding white-light seal on the city's well-traveled concrete  
the sidewalks carry your footprints on their shoulders like feathers  
and the river sings your music in the night

there in the marble-floored institutions you were awkward. . . I think perhaps so was I  
you put your strong arms around me as what? as lovers? as friends?  
I smell cigarettes and white roses on your breath

but you step out into the city into subdued neon lighted darkness—you?

our questions to a stranger on a bridge—if I jump just jump I know you will  
follow me, but then we would no longer know its perfection—our search for Alice  
on a lying-on-our-backs, soaking-up-the-moonlight impulse and catching a glimpse  
of her, black-haired, semi-angry, on our way back almost from Wonderland in the blue

beneath the streets the machines zigzag so that you don't know where we're  
going and I like that

I am not impressed by stoicism or martyrdom but you, free-willed spirit against  
long reflection, a man with glasses and too much responsibility, attempt to snatch  
away our youthful experience—you inspiring giant, you stand eyes honest gently  
searching, always moving,  
I bask in your passion, your soul, your burning light

I cannot understand how it is that you are here

we beat out a rhythm above them and chase each other around in circles while  
they watch and wait for us to fall

I am able to welcome you in ultra-violet energy, give no backwards glance towards  
the sunset

we preach to faceless thousands from the shiny concrete altars and I laughing expect  
someone to scream back in fury at your apocalyptic prophecy because that is what  
she and I will always do  
somehow the serendipity of it all strikes me as we meet at the middle  
selective memory does not seem to plague me senseless anymore  
in vanilla-scented train stations and fear in the dark between the trees and the  
shadows in the place whose name you can't remember

it occurs to me that the city has not captured you so much as you have captured  
the city

*~Anya Drabkin, II*



## *Lion*

Beneath the outer layers of my clothing, pressing against my chest with its cool presence perpetually felt, hangs a lion's claw from my neck. Aged, the cartilage has rotted away completely, and all that remains is a crescent-shaped shell, perfectly rounded and smooth. The tip is still as sharp as it ever was. Sometimes I imagine it piercing into a helpless prey, ripping the flesh downward in a straight line of crimson blood. The king of the jungle, the fiercest animal in the world. I marvel at its sight.

It was given to me in the Summer of 1998 by a man I'll never forget. "Never lose this. Ten years ago a lion was terrorizing my village, and so, I was forced to kill it. The lion was strong, but I was stronger. Hold this with you always. Remember, it is a symbol of the strength you will need. To fight." It lies on top of my heart.

\*\*\*\*\*

Fate works in mysterious ways. A callous yet kind, heartbreaking yet miraculous force, it toys with us daily. I'm quite sure of this now.

When the bomb detonated in Nairobi, Kenya, we weren't sure of our emotions. At first, the exhilaration of fear and excitement rushed through all of us. We knew we were safe, but it still amazed us that we were in the midst of such danger, that our parents were probably having fits while we were relaxing on a tropical beach far away from the city. Soon it sunk in, the graveness of the matter. We knew people whose family members had perished; our bus driver missed being in the bomb by ten minutes (his face was still shaking telling the story a week later), and I realized something that sent me into shock. I had left my pass-

port on the airplane the day before the bombing. Luckily, I had remembered it at the last second (while we were halfway across the ocean pass on our way to the island), and I ran back at full speed to grab the passport off of the airplane minutes before its departure. If I hadn't remembered in time, I would have had to go back to the embassy building to get a new passport the day the bomb struck. And then the severity of the catastrophe hit the next day when the newspapers came out. Kenyan newspapers aren't subtle. Bloodied faces, streets soiled with crimson streaks, and freely flowing reddened tears filled the cover page. We felt the tragedy then. We saw the melancholy countenances that consumed a whole nation then.

And, yet, somehow, fate twisted a great event for me within this web of tragedy. Because of the bombing, I met Ben.

Philosophizing in the street about the never-ending chaos, a man raved on in sadness to a huge crowd of on-lookers. After his oration, I spoke to him myself. I asked him if the Kenyans were angry at us Americans for being an indirect cause of the bombing. I went on to express my grief at the situation. He was fascinated by my sympathy, which I found customary. He invited me to his home the next day so that we could further discuss politics, dilemmas, and solutions.

I sat there for hours, letting my mind flow freely, saying things that came from my heart at that moment, but which I never could have fathomed saying before. We rolled off of each other's philosophies, showing a mutual admiration for each other. I told him about the idealism in my heart, the way I couldn't accept the chaos that was run-

ning rampant in our world. I told him how frustrated and saddened I got whenever I thought that it couldn't work. But I told him that I wouldn't believe that it couldn't work, that my naiveté and passion were two things that I had to hold onto. Then he disclosed to me that he was actually the leader of an underground political group that was mobilizing to rid Kenya of its corrupt totalitarian President, Daniel P. Arap Moi. Through unity and the power of "one love," he knew that victory was so conceivable, yet he was fully aware of the immense difficulty of getting the "rock to start roll-

ing." He stared into my eyes without wincing and told me that he was willing to die for his cause. And then, feeling my vast concern, idealism, and fervor for justice, he said he expected me to be a great leader too. He then handed me the claw.

As I finally got up to leave, we promised each other that somehow we'd meet again. One of his followers noted an old Kenyan proverb, "Men, unlike mountains, can move to be together." "Yes," Ben added, "but together, men can move mountains." My heart raged with idealism as I walked away.

*~Sam Graham-Felsen, I*



Dear Jane,

I've been sitting here for about an hour with my notebook in front of me thinking of something to right (or maybe write).

I had to change pens because the other one ran out of ink. I wanted to write you a story like I was a screenwriter and I would come up with some cool story for you to read, but I guess I'm not as good as I thought I was at doing it. But I guess I'll give it a try. This story would probably be for a short independent film.

The kid's just sitting there, staring at the paper, as if transfixed in a coma. For some reason he can't put any of his thoughts down on paper, and when he tries it comes out all wrong. He's just trying to write a note to this girl he's liked for awhile, but he can never seem to say anything of particular value or interest. He never has anything good to say; he's an idiot, a goofball. He's gonna blow this one, that's what he thinks anyway, for the second time. His head's supported by his left hand as he taps the paper with his pen in his right. He slowly strays from the note as his thoughts, concerns, and dreams begin to unfold before him. He slips into a quiet lull while listening to his Dave Matthews CD, and does something he has been trying to do for awhile: get things straight, organize, be at peace with himself. Right now the weight of the world is heavy on his shoulders, and his knees begin to buckle, and he starts to think that soon he will no longer be able to stay up and will collapse with all the hopes,

expectations, and dreams that he possesses. So much has bothered him recently, so much unnecessary stuff has been thrown on top of him, things that could've been taken care of if only he had the motivation to do it then, and do it right, and that just makes him feel all the worse. He begins to think of specifics. What it is exactly that has taken up so much space in his life that has forced out and covered up all of his better qualities. He has lost the ability to have fun or crack a joke. These details have taken over his smile, although it was never that pretty to begin with. It has changed him and makes him wonder if this is what growing up and being older are all about. If so, he should probably stay a kid all his life, because it doesn't look so fun out there in the "real" world. What will happen when his grades aren't so good this term after being pushed by his parents everyday, hearing them complain about what he should've done or what he needs to do? What will they say when they see the report card, how will they act then? This is the most important year of his life, and he's not even putting forth half the effort that he should be. What college is he going to go to? Will his parents have enough money to send him there? And suddenly like a wild fire he is consumed by everything and it hits him like McGwire's 62nd.

Why aren't I starting for basketball? What am I going to do next weekend? How can I sneak my way through English this term? Do you need to be smart to be Mayor? When will I die? Are my parents proud of me? Am I becoming the one thing I fear the most: wasted potential? Will all my friends be OK? Will I be sad for the rest of my life? Does this girl like me as much as I like her? Who are my real friends? Where's all my confidence, my charm, charisma, and wit? Can I hit a 3-pointer consistently? Is there a God? Is there any hope? Am I a failure?

He's down on one knee, he doesn't know how much longer he can hold up. He wants to shut his eyes and when he opens them again maybe everything will be gone. He wishes that he were asleep so he does not have to have any more of these foolish thoughts and he can just shut off his mind and have peace for awhile.

He takes a step back and looks at his life at this point; he sees himself under enormous pressure, about ready to submit to the insanity, when there is a change. He takes on a new philosophy that is slowly reassuring his faith in himself. He hears the CD, 'What's the use in worrying, what's the use in hurrying,' and then he realizes. . .

All of this stuff that is going on, all this BS, is a very minor detail. He sees what really is important in life, how lucky he really is. He has been to a place where life cannot get much worse, where it is as close to death without dying, and ever since he returned he has seen nothing the way it used to be. He knows that as long as there is a roof over his head and friends and family to love him, everything else is icing on the kiwi cake. He rises off one knee. How can one be worried about what sneakers to wear when he has seen children run through their houses full of broken glass in their bare feet? I just don't think the same. It doesn't matter what type of clothes I wear or even if I get into that college I applied to early. I know that no matter where I go I will have friends; I know that no matter what happens to me I will be happy. That is what is important. He stands up straight, the pressure dissolving off his shoulders. He thinks again, these are the best times of our lives, so why should we live them in such scrutiny and insanity. We should enjoy what we have, because we never know how much longer it could last. I mean the world may end tomorrow! But don't sweat it, I know a better place where we can all go, you just have to have faith. It's hard to explain, you have to have been there to understand, but with this new attitude, the kid is now standing strong with all his pressure disappeared. He has his confidence back, his wit, his charm; he has made room for the better things in life. Even if this attitude does not last forever, he takes advantage of it this time and begins to write his note. . .

"I've been sitting here for about an hour with my notebook in front of me thinking of something to right (or maybe write)."

But before he goes any further, he sits back, and for the first time in awhile, he can smile, although his smile was never that pretty to begin with.

*~John Fitzgerald, II*

## Mr. Poppin' Fresh: The Final Chapter

Since long, long ago,  
In the ads on TV,  
Has the Pillsbury Doughboy  
Cried out with glee.  
With a poke in the stomach  
And a smile on his face,  
Our little white dumpling  
Has had enough grace  
Not to say one word,  
He doesn't mind, so it seems,  
And he continues to promote  
Yummy pastries with creams.

But just take a look  
In his little white head,  
Had he the nerve,  
The things he would have said!  
"Oh stop, that's enough,  
You're making me cringe,  
I don't want to imagine  
Where your fingers have been,  
This poking, this jabbing,  
Is this some cruel trick?  
My bowels are churning,  
It's making me sick!  
I've lost one of my kidneys,  
I've got only one more,  
I don't know what to do,  
I can't take this much more!"

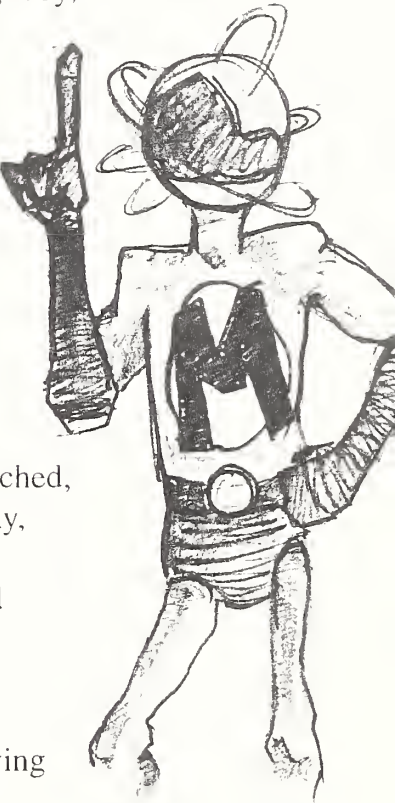
But of course, no one heard him,  
He hadn't the nerve,  
So he tried to keep smiling  
And his public to serve,  
Till one sad, sad day,  
When a man from the moon  
Saw the little round man and thought,  
"I'll poke him too."

So he poked him!

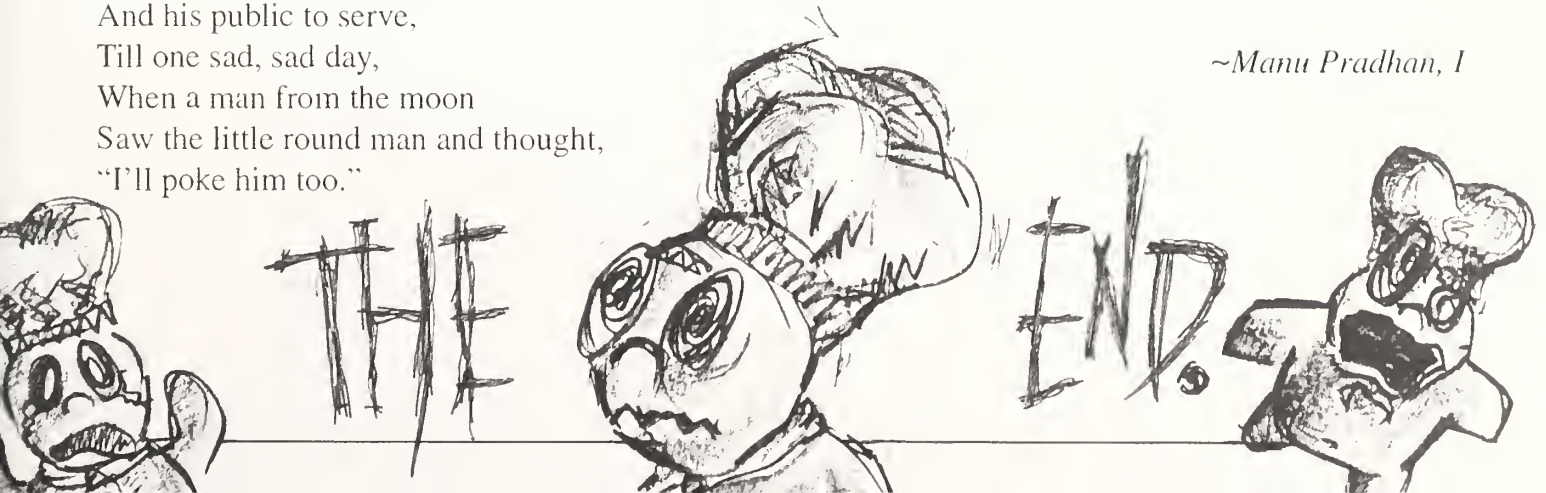
Now the Pillsbury Doughboy,  
So quiet since then,  
Began feeling quite funny  
In his abdomen,  
"This is it," thought the Doughboy,  
"The end is at hand,  
I can feel it inside me,  
Just strike up the band,"  
And clenching his teeth,  
For the last time, it seems,  
The Doughboy gave in,  
And let out a scream.

Oh, how he screamed!

He screamed and he hollered  
And he whooped and he wretched,  
And the moonman, by the way,  
Was quite taken aback,  
And the Doughboy continued  
To vomit and quake,  
Convulsing and coughing,  
He'd had all he could take!  
Till he suddenly stopped moving  
And collapsed on the floor;  
The moonman, self-conscious,  
Went straight for the door.  
"But I didn't do anything!"  
The man to himself said,  
Well surprise, Mr. Moonman,  
The Doughboy is dead.



~Manu Pradhan, 1



## *Ice Cream*

I was getting ready for bed when he arrived. Becky came into my room and said, beaming, "Sandy's at the door." My contacts were out and I was embarrassed to be seen in glasses. I'm sure my hair was a mess. I had on torn bell-bottoms and a tight blue boatneck shirt.

Becky accompanied me to the door. I asked him in, which he declined; then Becky left, patting me cheerfully on the shoulder. He stood holding a pair of socks, smiling sheepishly in the doorway. "Here. I brought the socks you left in my car. I thought you might need them." He extended a red flannel arm, handing me ratty gray hiking socks. I had left them, wet, in his car, after he had driven me and some friends home from a hiking trip. We had met on that trip. "Would you like to come in, have some coffee or something?"

"Oh, no, I'm fine, I really shouldn't stay," but he readjusted his footing and leaned against the doorframe. I stood in the kitchen holding the socks. "So are you going on that trip to Washington?" he asked, launching a conversation about school, concerts, and hiking which lasted an hour. He was easy to talk to. There were no awkward silences.

Sandy didn't care about clothes. He wore straight-legged jeans, not bells, and black Keds with white soles. His hair haloed his head in a blond puff. He was letting it grow long. In the sixties, men didn't know how to brush their hair.

It got late. My legs were tired. Finally he told me his reason for "just passing through." He had picked up a gallon of ice cream at Pat Mitchell's, a wonderful gourmet ice-cream store before there was gourmet ice cream in every convenience store. At Pat Mitchell's they chopped huge bars of chocolate for the chocolate chip ice cream. It was like eating a chocolate chip surrounded by a bit of ice cream. Anyway, a gallon of ice cream was sitting out in his car so he left.

"Did it melt, mom?"

"What? Oh, I never found out."

By the time I remembered to ask Daddy, he had forgotten.

*~Cara Furman, I*







## *Ponds of the Mind*

I'm feeling things I've never felt before, I'm treading on a new thread, swimming in mysterious waters. And I may never know all about these new things, but I hope there's time enough to explore and patience enough to let me. I want to be surrounded by these waters; I want to feel the silky ripples of your ocean slide through my fingers. I want to play knots with the thread and to balance on top of it, feeling I will never fall; I want to jump and land gracefully back on my golden thread. And if I fall, it will be a hard fall, because never will there be another golden thread to catch me; or if I drown, it will be deep inside your ocean and where the sun never touches to show me the light, where these dreams will never cease to exist.

*~Carla Poles, IV*

## English as a Sexist Language

(Also Racist, Speciesist, Lookist, Ableist, Sizeist, Colorist, Etc.)

The political correctness movement has gone far towards eradicating many forms of prejudice and stereotypes in our society, despite the ridicule to which it is subjected by our dismayingly widespread population of right-wing (not meaning any offense to the winged species which share our planet) conservatives (not to be confused with the conservationists—good heavens, or sheavens, no!) In recent years, womyn have barely begun to come into their own, and people of all skin tone variations have only started to feel freer to disregard culturalist thinking and express their own heritage (or sheritage. From now on, when confronting such sexist spellings, I shall use just one form, being careful to alternate between the “male” and “female” spellings of each word. Please understand that I do this not out of any latent prejudice toward either sex, but for brevity’s sake.) We have made this possible, as I have said, despite the jeerings of the enlightenment-impaired conservatives in our midst.

However, there is still one area which I feel is considerably further from the politically correct ideal than any other aspect of our society. That is the issue of language. Strive as we might, none but the most enlightened of us consistently make use of such gender-neutral spellings as “wommon” and “persun,” habitually refer to the physically challenged or the differently abled by their correct, bias-free titles, or take any one of a hundred other minuscule, yet fundawomynal steps toward eliminating long-standing prejudices from our society. Who among us would feel completely comfortable making a reference to a “morally challenged freelance entertainer” in casual conversation, rather than the common term so rich in stereotype, “prostitute”? Who would dare refer to a persun who imbibes excess amounts of alcohol more frequently than is usual as “liquor-enabled”? Then there are such frequently used expressions as “Man, oh, man!” which is so obviously sexist—if we cannot manage to make people acknowledge that *that* is an inappropriate statement, what hope do we have for such insidiously prejudiced terms as “a wolf in sheep’s clothing,” connoting slyness and deceit and ignoring the fact that the wolf operates on the laws of nature and that any method he\she\it chooses of securing a meal and satisfying its nutritional needs are completely fair and praiseworthy; or one like “sisters under their skins,” which not only ignores the male half of society but implies that the skins themselves make the least particle of difference?

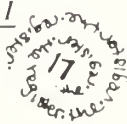
Alas, we have gone too far on our present track ever to mend our ways. The English language is no longer

flexible enough to adapt itself to the linguistic needs of a new, more enlightened society. Yet without changing our language, how can we hope to change our outlook? The way we speak ought to be the first item on our forum. If we cannot make people think the way that they ought to, if they prove too intractable to be taught the rules of a decent, non-biased society, must we not at least change the way that they talk and provide a semblance of open-mindedness?

Thus I present my idea. Let us “scrap” the English language entirely and develop a new, completely stereotype-free language. In reality, any English word carries some connotation with it, be it latent or overt. If we are truly dedicated to the principle that all things are morally neutral and most actions so, then we will need a completely new language. English has become so stained and smeared with prejudice of every type and sort that we can never hope to wipe it clean. How wonderful it would be if the word “wommon” brought to mind a picture of a member of the female sex, and nothing more than that! If the word “black” brought forth a vision of the color black, with no connotations of evil or wrongdoing attached to it (let alone the fact that in so many people’s minds today it can bring up a picture of a persun of African-American sheritage—ponder that for a moment, if you will). If a snake were simply a snake, not an image of deceit and treachery.

Yes, only with a new set of arrangements of vowels and consonants can we achieve this much-desired goal. We absolutely must start afresh. I have discussed this idea with several of my colleagues and they are all in agreement. Therefore, we have put in a petition to the government to consider our idea and to put together an appropriate list of people who could serve on a committee to begin work on our new language. True, when one of my com-madres who happens to have a friendly relationship with a member of Congress pitched her idea to him, he laughed outright. However, I am not particularly concerned about this. After all, he was a male, and a Republican one at that. I have high hopes that the more sensible womyn and men in the government will respond more sensibly, and I await their decision anxiously. Until then, I must content myself with hoping, dear readers, that in a few years I will be able to continue my battle against stereotypes in another series of articles—written in a completely different language. What a triumph that would be! Truly, it would be one of the most important steps the hummon race has made in all of herstory.

~Kelly Hourihan, I



## *Dancer*

She asked me  
"do you sleep in your dreams?"  
I wanted to scream so silently that she would have to hear  
because I do not  
she tells me:  
she dreams in her dreams  
always the black behind the white  
pressing, surging forward, her darkness overtaken by a web of idealism  
I speak in hardness and violence  
as she sings in velvet  
and though I cry, her tears are no more precious than mine,  
still I ask her  
"what is your name?"  
she dances for no one  
and I am jealous of the lines she carves in the air  
she tells me to take pictures with old cameras—and love—  
she stops, suddenly, remembering my rarity  
she asks me  
"where have you been?"

*~Anya Drabkin, II*



## *One for the Road*

He had been driving for almost six hours now. His last stop had been at a bank in southern California, and before that, a gas station for a fill-up. He eyed the briefcase on his right. The sweat that was on the handle a few hours ago was now on the steering wheel, still caused by the same thoughts. As he raised his eyes from the briefcase to look into the black abyss that lay directly ahead of his high beams, his eyes caught the crucifix that hung from a chain on the rear view mirror. He looked closely at the detailed expression on the tiny Jesus' face. Then he grabbed the chain and yanked it off with the mirror falling onto the cigarette-burnt carpet.

"I don't need your accusing eyes," he said as he chucked the necklace out the window. The crucifix landed as the gun had a few miles back: on a desolate road in a mist of dust kicked up by the rear wheels of the tan station wagon.

He crossed the border into Mexico at ten o'clock. He let out a deep breath, not knowing whether it was a sigh of relief or of guilt.

He drove on farther for half an hour and pulled in at a bar. It was the first building he had seen for awhile but then again, he hadn't really been paying too close attention to his outside surroundings. He only saw this place because of the lights out front on the wooden steps that went up to the door. And besides, he was tired and needed a drink. His last drink had been a quick shot of vodka that he swigged down in the bathroom of the gas station in California while looking in the mirror, pondering the thing that he was about to do.

The man stepped into the bar with the briefcase clutched tightly in his hands with a vulture-like grip. He stopped in the doorway and he took a look around. What he saw was five people: the bartender behind the bar directly across from him, one skinny man in a tan T-shirt sitting at the bar, two men playing guitars in the far right corner, and a man in a Hawaiian shirt sitting to his left with his back facing the bar. When he felt secure in his own mind, he perched himself on a stool next to the skinny man at the bar and or-

dered a shot of whiskey.

"Come here often?" asked the skinny man and every one in the bar began to chuckle except for the man in the Hawaiian shirt who was wearing headphones. They all seemed to know each other and that fact made the man with the briefcase feel uneasy. He just smiled his response to the man's little joke.

The man with the briefcase was surprised every one was speaking English. He wondered why he thought life would be so different in Mexico.

"My name is Eddie," the skinny man said as he extended his hand. The man with the briefcase shook it with a sweaty palm without giving his name in return and then ordered another whiskey.

"Rough day at the office?" Eddie said and everyone, except the man in the Hawaiian shirt, broke out in chuckles again. By now the man with the briefcase was trying to figure out if Eddie was drunk or just trying to be friendly. He guessed friendly when Eddie apologized and offered to put a round of drinks on his tab. When the two guitar players in the corner began cheering, Eddie said through his laughs, "Not for you guys. . .for me and my new buddy here!"

Eddie was expecting a name to be given, but still there was none. The man with the briefcase took the drink in one swallow.

"Whoah, one more round on me, but then you're buyin'. You seem like an expensive man, Shooter!"

"Why did you call me 'Shooter'?"

"You're takin' down whiskey like there's no tomorrow! C'mon. . . It's a nickname."

"OK, Eddie, I got the next few rounds covered. Just let me use the facilities," he said as he slid off the stool with his briefcase in hand and went into the bathroom. He went into a stall, locked the door, and opened the case. He took out four fifty-dollar bills to cover him for the rest of the night without having to open the case again. He stuffed the fifties into his pocket, closed and locked the case, and went back into the barroom.

During the next few hours Eddie told the man with the briefcase everyone's story, except his own. The bartender, Ted, fought in World War II as a Marine for the United States and now had a wooden leg because of a stray bullet. The two men in the corner, the only two actual Mexicans in the bar, Billy and José, both used to be professional wrestlers. And the man in the Hawaiian shirt, whose name was Walter, was from Maine and was "off his rocker" according to Eddie. On Halloween in 1987, Walter tried to beat some trick-or-treaters with a frying pan while screaming obscenities. When the authorities came for him, he was already on his way to Mexico and he has been at this bar every night since.

"Walter is strange, though," Eddie slurred out. "he nurses one drink a night . . . from eight until . . . cl . . . closing time. Don't cha, Wally-boy?" Walter did not hear the ranting. He was listening to his headphones. Walter looked at his watch, stood up, paced the room three times and walked out the door.

"You know what that means, guys. Closing time," Ted said.

Billy and José left, but Eddie and the man

with the briefcase were still talking while Ted cleaned up.

"I'm just waiting for my ride," Eddie said matter-of-factly.

"Thanks for the drinks. Y. . .yooze is a good man," the man with the briefcase responded in a very intoxicated manner. "Hey. . .wah. . .whaddid. . .yooze is a good man."

"Nah," Eddie said, "I just like to gets tah know the new people in town. Ah! My ride."

The man with the briefcase felt his stomach churn as he raised his eyes to meet a police officer standing in the doorway.

"Come on, Chief. You gotta get back to the station."

When he got into his car, he waved goodbye to Eddie and pulled away. About a mile down the road, he burst out laughing just thinking that he had just spent four hours conversing with the Chief of Police of this small town. He felt invincible now as he drove on into the black abyss at ninety-seven miles per hour. He looked down at the briefcase and laughed some more, feeling the power of the alcohol and the speed. He was set for life.

~Thomas Grimaldi, II

## *An Everyday Abduction*

Coral Park, a big, beautiful and very popular park darkened with the approach of the night, and the arrival of a UFO from above. Strange vibrations were sent out and sent chills over the population below. Suddenly, all was quiet; the eerie, ominous object rested over the park. Everyone went about their regular business, as if nothing were going on above their heads. Strange vessels were constantly floating above; it was obvious we weren't alone. There is other intelligent life out there.

I entered the park. Food is always abundant there, so I began to look for something to eat. I'm not much of a meat-eater; I'm more of a vegetarian, but sometimes I just can't resist a piece of meat. So, I took a bite into a nice, thick, juicy piece of meat. . . Ugh, (cough), I began to choke, my throat began to hurt.

I began struggling about, trying to breathe and the pain in my throat increased more and more. Then, I felt myself being lifted. I tried to pull away, but the aliens' strength was more than mine. They pulled me out of my atmosphere into theirs. I couldn't breathe and struggled to get away. As I heavily gasped for breath, I heard one of the younger aliens say, "Dad, I caught a fish!"

~Michele Tassarini, III

## *Saturday Night in September*

Two AM on a rooftop in Allston, a cool, drizzly Saturday night in September. The raindrops linger on my eyelashes, blurring everything around the edges like a dream sequence on TV. His hair curls softly into wispy tendrils around his face. The black tar of the rooftop is cool and smooth beneath my bare feet, and chimneys and doorways make dark, curious shapes silhouetted against the night sky. The sky looms heavily overhead with no stars to pin it back, a dark, rich purple, not quite black, swirling with wisps of deep wine red. The damp, heavy nighttime air wraps itself around me, and a shiver slides down my neck and backbone like an icy finger.

We sit huddled up and gaze at the world below that seems so very far away from our celestial fortress in the sky. Although the streets will be silent and desolate in a few hours, for now they are bustling. Streetlights cast a dim, urban glow over everything. I listen to the impatient honking of car horns, like frantic geese, and the hiss of tires on slick wet pavement as the cars zoom by. The college kids on their way to and from parties walk with their hands thrust deep inside their pockets, their coats zipped all the way up to their chins, their heads down to shield their faces from the rain. I recognize the confident, cocky swagger of frat boys clad in khakis and baseball caps, and the nervous, hurried wobbling of trendy girls in platform shoes that look great but just aren't made for walking. Umbrellas of every size and color go by, bobbing up and down as their owners step carefully over curbside puddles and clumps of soggy, wet leaves that look and feel exactly like Frosted Flakes left in the milk too long.

We hear strains of techno drifting up from the party below us, the bass pumping and throbbing as if the building itself has an infectious, rhythmic heartbeat. But up here on the roof, just the two of us, a deep, serene silence envelopes everything like a mother's arms cradling her sleeping child. The people down below seem so small and innocent, scurrying around like mice in a maze, each one so lost in his own thoughts, each one so wrapped up in his own world. I feel like an angel up on this roof, next to him. I feel like we know some big secret that no one else knows, way up here looking down on the world together. The rain falls softly like a silver mist and the great wide open is ours, two AM on a rooftop in Allston, Saturday night in September.

*~Mary Ellen Williams, II*



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## *The Master of PANG*

pang - n: a sudden sharp attack (as of pain)

Children fear me, and that's the way I like it. Adults fear me, and I like that too. I am the Master of PANG. I am one of countless reasons that people hate coming to my abode. They have to sit calmly in the chair all the while I'm right next to them, waiting. Waiting to pounce, waiting to inflict the worst pain some will ever experience, waiting for the right moment when my victim thinks he's in the clear and past the worst part; that is when I work best. They'll squirm and move and try to run. They can't. Some will try to shrug it off as if it didn't hurt. Stop lying, you and I both know it did. It always does. I am always victorious in my attempts to make people hurt.

I wake up. It's early in the morning. The sun is shining through the window of my lair. It reflects off my silvery side and makes an image on the wall. I think of what kind of day it is going to be, who my next victim will be, how I can make someone scream a new note into this world, what horror I can bring into people's eyes, which of my victim's dreams I'll be entering tonight to cause nightmares.

A woman dressed all in white comes in and cleans off my friends and me as she does every morning. She takes especially good care of me. She gently rubs my head clean until it glistens in the light. Then she gives me a quick dip in alcohol, and I'm ready to cause some pain.

I rest in my usual position, among comrades and fellow warriors. We are all arranged along the end of the tray. We are held to the tray by rubber extensions that grasp their arms around us so that we don't fall to the ground. It is as if we are suspended in mid air, ready to jump into action at any moment. Although I sit with them, I am somehow on a different level due to my abilities. They look up to me for what I can do. They respect me for my sheer power to make a grown man yell and holler.

I look at the wall from where I sit and see

my past victims. Their pictures are posted for me to remember each of them. The one thing I can never figure out is their smiles. How can they be smiling? Don't they remember me? Don't they remember what hell I put them through in this very room?

As I ponder these questions I look at the clock and see that it is 8:00. Time for my first victim. I wait patiently knowing that in a few minutes I will be able to do the one thing I do best: cause agony.

My first victim of the day walks in and sits down in the chair. He is a young boy around the age of ten, an easy victim. The same woman who cleans my friends and me off every morning is right behind him. His countenance is of masked fear. He forces a smile at the woman while she talks to him about how things aren't going to hurt and how he has nothing to worry about. He knows she is lying to him. I stare at him. Every couple of seconds he sneaks a quick look in my general direction. He quickly turns away each time, realizing that I really am there and that I'm not going anywhere. I can see the fear in his eyes. This is going to be too easy.

A few minutes pass as this little engagement goes on. Then, through the door, as he does every day with a steady and calm gait, the doctor enters. He greets his victim with a warm smile and a handshake. The face of the child somehow finds the strength to force another smile. I don't think it will take long before he's screaming.

"Let's have a look," the doctor says. The kid slowly lies back and cautiously opens his mouth. He knows the pain is coming. The doctor reaches to my left and grabs two of my friends, Rorrim and Kcip. He sticks them in the kid's mouth and starts to "hmmmm" to himself. They are the first of my friends customarily used by the doctor. I envy them a little because they get to check things out first, but they never seem to have any fun. They just observe, never inflict.

"Looks good," says the doctor and the kid,

as if suddenly waking from a trance, smiles and closes his mouth. "But your molar has grown a little too big." The kid's face turns bright white with fear. He knows what's coming. He thought he was clear of danger, out of the tunnel, past the danger zone. "So, for your own good, I'll have to reduce its size." Music to my ears. The doctor never says *drill*. He always says *reduce*, as if this is a different and better thing. Either way, I still cause the same amount of agony.

The doctor reaches over to where I am. He firmly grasps me and presses my button to give me a test run before I go to work. All my friends are looking at me, wishing that they were me this very moment. It is my time to shine, my time to cause hurt, my moment of glory and triumph. "This is only going to hurt a little," he says. "Yeah right," I think to myself.

I enter the boy's mouth and look around. It is dark and damp like most mouths. I have to pause a second to get my bearings. When I pass by the front row of his teeth, I see his tongue retreating in fear of my power. It pushes as far back in his mouth until it can go no further. His teeth watch this event, as if knowing that in a few seconds they will be the ones retreating in fear.

This kid has a good looking set of teeth. His molars are aligned well, his incisors look like they're in good condition, and generally he looks to have healthy teeth from my point of view. But I have a job to do, so I focus.

The doctor presses my button and I begin to pick up speed. I'm noisy. I wish I could see the face of the kid right now: nowhere to run, nowhere to hide, he's my victim now.

Whirling around and around I wait for the first contact, the first place that I can grind my way through. It comes, and I ease my head into his tooth, ripping off the unwanted parts.

Things are going great when I realize that something is missing. What is it? I'm doing a good job on this kid's tooth, I'm working properly, but there is something missing. I know, his scream. The kid isn't screaming. I count 1 Mississippi, 2

Mississippi, 3 Mississippi, 4 Mississippi, 5 Mississippi. This kid is good. He hasn't even made a noise yet. He won't make it to 10, no way, never. 9 Mississippi, 10 Mississippi, 11 Mississippi. . . still nothing. Maybe he's passed out, and I just don't know because I can't see. I bear down harder to see just what this kid is made of. I am now working my hardest, and he hasn't made a whimper. What will my friends think of me? The shame, the sorrow, how can I live with myself if I can't even make a ten-year-old kid cry out in pain? Come on kid, cry. Whimper. Do something!

Finally the doctor stops me. I know I've failed. I don't want to leave the kid's mouth. I don't want to face my friends back at the rack. As I exit his mouth, the light of the room blinds me for a minute causing me to close my eyes. I don't want to open them. I don't want to face the humiliation. I quickly look up at the kid's face hoping to find him dead or passed out. No such luck. The kid didn't even look hurt. He sat there and took the pain. "Good job," said the doctor, "you're a very strong young man. You can go now," he says to the boy as he puts me back in my spot. "Thank you," the boy replies with a huge grin on his face and walks out the door.

The doctor picks me up again and looks me over. "How'd he do that?" he says to himself. "I couldn't," he stammers.

I failed. I couldn't bear to look at my friends who were probably all taken a back by the kid's power and my failure to make him scream. I returned to the rack and found my place. My friends were all silent and I knew what each of them was thinking. All was lost. My comrades, the respect I received, and the pride I had for my abilities were all things that I wouldn't have for quite some time. However, I did gain something for that kid: respect. He was the first person ever to stand up to me and win. I hang my head in shame and wonder if I can ever be called the Master of PANG again.

~Aaron McCormick, II

## ***About A Friend***

*in memoriam*

I did not know him as a boy, but did as a young man,  
Face full of freckles, fun-loving kid, smiled as much as one can.  
I remember the day we met, like it was yesterday.  
I was the new kid in town, all alone, walking the day away.  
He introduced himself to me, and I did just the same.  
That happened in the hot summer of nineteen ninety-three.  
I attended school that fall, and there he recognized me.  
We began to talk to each other more as time passed by.  
Soon enough he was one of my best friends; he made me laugh and cry.  
If I was lying in my bed too sick to go outside,  
He would cheer me up to the point where I would rise from where I lay.  
We would go out and have fun in any way that we could.  
Making fun of everything on the corners of our neighborhood.  
At the end of every night, we'd walk home together  
Our feet as heavy as a cinder block, heads lighter than a feather.  
Sometimes we'd have our differences, but these we could work out.  
Happy times with bitter times, that's what a friendship is all about.  
The time came when we were the best friends any friends could be.  
It was at this time that the worst thing in my life happened to me.  
It was a summer day just like the one when we first met.  
I stood at work, as heat attacked, covered in a blanket of sweat.  
The line was out the door that day, I felt so far behind.  
I thought of what my friends were doing, and pictured them in my mind.  
I thought of them all sitting outside, resting in the sun,  
Spending a normal summer day joking and laughing, having fun.  
I was informed someone had called me, so I took a break.  
I picked up the phone, heard my brother's words, hoped he made a mistake.  
I told him to repeat his words, tell me what he had said.  
He told me one more time that our best friend, Kevin, had been found dead.  
The phone dropped like the tears that rolled straight down my pale white face.  
I lit a cigarette, prayed to God, and walked out of my work place.  
I called my friend, Mike, and asked him to come pick me up.  
Tears drop and soon cigarettes became the contents of my cup.  
I did not want to believe that any of this was true.  
We drove to his house and saw the truck with doors of white and blue.  
It was the coroner's van; I was hesitant to stare.  
I looked at the door of his green house, and saw some movement from there.  
What I saw at an instant was what would make anybody gag,  
Two men carrying my best friend outside inside a body bag.  
His father had been looking for him, found him from the deck.  
Swaying from an overhead fixture with a belt around his neck.  
Kevin never tried to get me mad and he never lied.  
I don't know what bothered him so much that he'd commit suicide.  
I had a tough time dealing with the loss of a true friend.  
Although it ended tragically, we were great friends until the end.  
In looking back I see that it may have been in his fate.  
I realized that friends matter most in life, I realized this too late.  
My friend is now in heaven; I carry on, or I try.  
He made me laugh, he made me cry, but worst of all, he said good-bye.

*~Brendan Howard, I*

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## For B.F.F

And they thought that summer days would never fade  
And the inevitable hurt would be delayed  
And they thought they could always hide in that masquerade  
Of glowing skin and warmth's persuade

But the days grew colder  
and her expressions were bolder  
Yet the story grew older,  
And drifted away

Still she misses  
The gentle sun's kisses  
Of brown on her crinkled nose  
Still she aches  
For past mistakes  
Of falling too fast  
And landing hard

But who was to know  
And who's to blame?  
And why does her body  
Still sigh in shame?

She'll escape, pride intact  
(And Prince Charming, of course)  
To where giggles will drape  
Every last resort  
Goodbye to the summer  
To half-hearted *nevers* and *always*  
To unfulfilled promises, to the sun's burning rays  
To silly tears and mournful laughs  
To breaking a fragile heart in half  
Hello to changes, to redemption  
To forgetting the good and remembering the bad  
And thank you, fall,  
For catching me.

~Maura McDonald, II

## 35 Stimson

I take the bus to school. It's one of those West Roxbury charter deals; it originates on Stimson St. in the heart of the neighborhood, then travels down Centre St. through J.P., on to Huntington Ave. in Roxbury, and finally ends up on good old Avenue Louis Pasteur in the Fens. The whole trip takes about twenty-five minutes—not bad, considering Boston traffic. The reason I take the bus to school is because, at eighteen, I still don't have a license. This is pathetic. The reason I don't have a license is because, at eighteen, I am terrified of driving. I mean paranoia, hyperventilating, sporadic, uncontrollable bursts of pure and utter panic, simultaneously combined with instantaneous images of automobile wreckage, death, destruction, and I'm entirely to blame, so don't even THINK of getting me behind that wheel—terrified of driving. This is even more pathetic. But, somehow, I just don't care. I'm 5'2". I shouldn't be maneuvering massive monsters of steel anyway, it isn't even natural. Therefore, I am perfectly content to let a trained professional take responsibility of both my life and the lives of others, while I sit in contemplation on an overheated bus.

In the morning, I am usually tired and always irritated at having to be dragged out of my bed at an ungodly pre-dawn hour, and these misfortunes combined with the aforementioned excessive heat make conversation difficult. Therefore, I do not talk. Most upperclassmen do not talk; we are normal human beings. However, if you take a chartered bus, you already know that the overwhelming majority of passengers on it are underclassmen, and underclassmen are not normal human beings. Underclassmen have yet to have the massive weight of reality crush whatever pleasant visions of life they have into sticks of chewing gum, and are generally happy, optimistic people. In the morning, I hate happy, optimistic people. Because they talk. And talk. And talk. And then they realize that perhaps I, sitting in my little, overheated corner of irritation and fatigue, minding my own business, cannot hear what pleasantries they are exchanging. And, of course, I must hear what pleasantries they are, indeed, exchanging. So they shout.

And yell. And holler. And scream. And finally, they screech. And so to preserve my sanity, my only course of action is to take out my ooze and blow them all into little underclassmen bits.

This, of course, is not true. The law prohibits the slaying of children, and I have no desire to spend the rest of my days in prison: twelve years of public school is quite enough, thank you. But there is another reason my murderous rampages are quelled; there is a consolation in it all. Because, once upon a time, I, too, was a fourteen year old kid. I was a wiggly, wily, wild child, loud and annoying, with a penchant for giggling and an ever-present grin. Before the responsibility of academic excellence was placed on my shoulders, and that realm of adulthood was a million years away, I was a little girl, setting off to conquer the world with a toothy, crooked smile and the idealism of one who has never known defeat. I was one of these kids, one of these amazing, wonderful, beautiful kids with the world in my hands and the impossible a reality. And I know now, even in my moments of utter despair and dissolution, that my future is not the dim wasteland of hopelessness it sometimes seems, but those days of complete idealism and supreme trust in tomorrow are long gone, and I don't think I will ever have them again. And, ah, the nostalgia for the days lost . . .

So, I sit sometimes and I muse, and I watch, and I wonder if one day, long after my time on the 35 Stimson has passed, if one of these kids will take my place and observe a new generation of underclassmen with the same bittersweet fondness I feel now. I wonder if someone will remember as I do, the days of her childhood, too quickly finished and stored away like colorful Christmas decorations in an attic collecting dust, and weep internally for the loss of innocence. Hopefully, she can say it was worth it. Hopefully, adulthood, with its insight and maturity, compensates for the forfeit of a once eternal hope. I still don't know if that's true.

So, grin and giggle and enjoy it while it lasts, my young friends. I'm glad I did.

~Kristin Purdy, I

## Unthinking Meditation

Flashing,  
graceful eyes,  
chocolate and visual savory,  
a joy to be exposed.  
A pleasure, hidden from the senses.  
(intellect put to beautiful use)  
Impressive, I find myself  
saying (to myself)  
and I ask something.  
She will

no

I am (unworthy) unwilling to face (rejection. Success?)

and

no

why?

maybe later.

I will ask later.

Now.

What?

No.

Later.

Lost in flashing chocolate eyes,  
wandering,

procrastinating,  
waiting.

(Shrug)

~William Young, *I*



## Fairy Tale

Where's my fairy godmother?  
Cinderella's in the lost and found  
Snow White ate an apple  
but the sleeping pills killed her first  
Sleeping Beauty stumbled over Snow White  
in her endless nightmare  
there was no spindle  
just a heroin needle

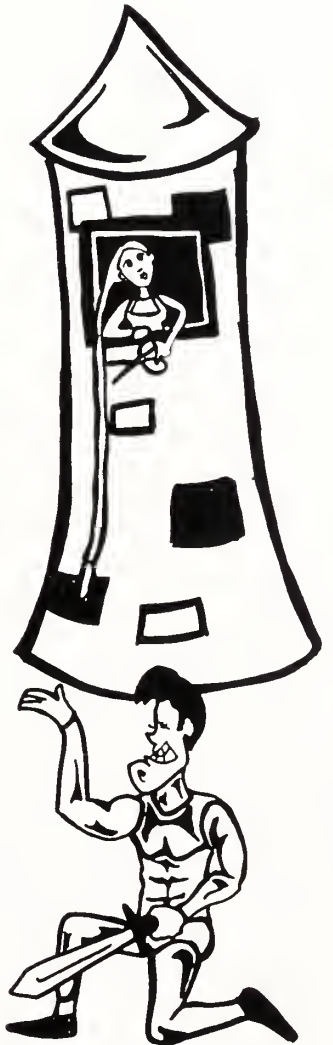
Jack and Jill went up a hill  
to fetch a pail of water  
Jack fell in the well  
but Jill didn't come tumbling after  
Red Riding Hood went in the woods  
and she met a big ol' wolf  
but she wasn't scared  
cause she had taken self defense

Rapunzel grew her hair long  
so she could escape the tower  
but some dumb prince tried to climb up  
so she had to cut it off  
little mermaid fell in love  
and turned into a human  
she hated the prince  
and she's drowning in the water  
because she forgot to swim

Hansel and Gretel went into the candy house  
Hansel was eaten but Gretel got away  
cause she was on a diet  
the cow jumped over the moon  
and she was the first female in space

the prince didn't save her  
she saved herself

~Nicole Tabolt, IV



## *The Chariot of the People*

Shelter from the cold rain, an entrance to the underworld, a sure way home, the T. Its stations loom all over the city, calling you into the darkness with their sweet fragrance of donuts and bouquets of flowers. The smells drift out on a mission, "Come down here, pay your 85¢, you know you want to." Alas, you must anyway; it is time to move on. As you descend the stairs, bidding farewell to the gargoyle-like pigeons who stand watch over the entrance, cooing amongst themselves, you leave the warm light behind.

They ask for your change, not demanding, merely asking for something that they are without. They tell you they are hungry, the shelter is closed and depending who you are and where you have come from, you give them what they want or ignore them. These homeless people wearing layers of clothes, sometimes jubilant with drink, wait to assail you with their tales of woe at the foot of the stairs. Many riders have been programmed to ignore them, seeing through them and not wasting time by listening. Others are sympathetic and surrender their shiny nickels, quarters and dimes to help someone else. Either way, the journey has just begun.

Others rush by you, oblivious to anything but their destinations. Curses are muttered as tokens and coins are dropped. A line has formed at the window where the T employee is slowly handing out change and tokens, and you curse the sign that cheerily tells you to buy tokens for your return trip now. The music of a harmonica floats into your ear while the fragrant flowers tempt your nose. As you pass through the turnstile, however, the ever-present stench of urine insults your nose; as goosebumps move up your arm, you wonder what that liquid is on the floor.

You look off into the long dark tunnel, wondering if there is a train approaching when movement catches your eye. A little furry mouse scurries between the tracks, immune to the rumblings of the trains and shocks those not used to the realities of the city. There is a man blowing on pipes in the ancient tradition of his ancestors, peddling his CD, and there is a television screen above advising you, in an uncaring way, that if you have been injured, there are law offices to help. The mice suddenly scatter, and there is a rush of warm air that pushes you lightly back and the train glides in.

The beast, grunting and breathing, comes to a stop but the doors refuse to open. A sense of unneeded panic quickly spreads, but just before it reaches its boil-

ing point, the doors open, welcoming everyone as equals. Leaving the station behind without a thought, you speed away towards a destination, unable to stop it. It is your destiny.

There is a newspaper for anyone who wants to read it, the cracked windows letting the yellowed light in for your reading pleasure. Passengers, either scared of who might sit next to them or oblivious to the fact that there are others on the train, keep their bags on the seat next to them, rather than put them on the floor. Others choose to stand, having sat all day in school or at work, holding on to the metal bars, warm where a hand has just left, as the train lurches forward. A man muttering advice and prayers of his own religion convinces his invisible friend that the end is near and eye contact is avoided for fear of the attachment of a friend who is not wanted. One rider forgets to hold on to the bar and falls backward, trying desperately to grab something before hitting the ground. He is saved by those around him, bumping and bouncing like a pinball, cursing until he finally finds the bar.

The car slows as it enters the station, passengers rising with bundled anticipation as the doors open and they flow out like water rushing from a shattered dam. Others, waiting to get on, taking your place, push their way on to get the open seat or standing space. Again you are bombarded by the sights, smells and sounds similar to those of the station you left, but yet unique to the new one in its own way. Maybe it's the canoli salesman instead of donuts, maybe the station is cleaned more frequently, maybe it is in a better neighborhood. You are almost reassured by the sight that is seen all over American subways, the homeless sleeping on the benches. They sleep where everyone is moving and are lost among the hustle and bustle, but we cannot stop to ponder this; we must move on and the consequences are felt only as one enters the station or when one leaves it.

You walk through the turnstile, cold through your shirt, avoiding those who would run into you to catch the train just leaving. As you walk by the newstand, the classical music tells you that hope is not lost. Up the escalator, an ascension to the above, one views the T not only as a way to get from Point A to Point B, but as a shelter for the shelterless. It is the support of the city; without it, Boston would cave in both literally and spiritually. So it was, is, and always will be.

*~Paul Stankus, II*

## *The Longest Seconds*

I remember that it was June because I remember the unbearable humidity that permeated the day. It was everywhere, a film of heat that could be found on every surface, making it grainy and moist. I was sitting in my chair in my room and could feel the welding process begin as the back of my knees began to stick to the chair. Beads of sweat were collecting on my upper lip despite the fact that I was taking every care not to move around and stimulate myself. But the events of that day I remember most had to do with my father's new car.

My father had been promoted earlier that month, a move that we all knew was inevitable. Being that our old Buick was beginning to rust and corrode and that the cushioned seats were beginning to show signs of wear, my father felt that this was the perfect time to buy a new car. He drove home in it that muggy, June day, honking happily as he pulled into the driveway. My sister and I had not seen the car before, leaving the details of the purchase to my father and mother. Upon hearing his arrival, I bounded down my steps with the grace of a rhinoceros on skates to see our new acquisition. I was not disappointed.

It was absolutely beautiful, the most magnificent piece of machinery I had ever beheld. It was a brand new Ford Explorer, the sport utility kind. It was very imposing and of the deepest black, so black that your eyes slid off of it. It shone with a glow of almost heavenly grace, beckoning me to explore every thing about it. I reached for the handle and heard the soothing pop as the door slid open. The smell of fresh leather assaulted my nose,

making me a little lightheaded. I climbed slowly into the back, feeling each crease of the soft material as it bent and formed around me. The car was immaculately clean, shining in its splendor. I had never thought of a car as breathtaking but this one gave me fits of speechlessness.

It was decided that I would be the first to have a ride in the new car, as I won the coin toss between my sister and me. I joyously climbed into the front seat, snapping the dull gray seatbelt into its place. My feet swung just a hair above the floor, reminding me of its awesome size. In something this big, I reasoned, nothing could hurt you. My father eased out the driveway and out into the June sun. We coasted down through the town square before my father decided to see what this car could really do. Winking at me, he suggested that we take it to the highway and let it roam. I was too giddy to dissuade him.

As we made our way to the highway, I began to grow uneasy as the large beast growled its way toward sixty miles per hour. It was not uncommon for my father to reach one hundred ten in a car before but this made me anxious. The trees on the side of the road were racing by at an imperceptible speed, their shapes fuzzy and indistinguishable. The lines dividing the lanes seemed to be specks; the other cars were dots on the tar ahead of us. I could feel myself being forced back into the confining arms of the chair, gravity putting me where it wanted me. The beast growled again as the speedometer read one ten. We were careening around the curves, taking them with almost stock-car precision. I imagined myself

on the track of the Daytona 500, whipping around as fast as could be.

I think it was because of our speed that we didn't see the other car.

As my father went to switch lanes, a small blue Corolla blasted its horn. Suddenly, everything slowed. I could feel my head patiently move from one shoulder to the other as the force of the blow jarred me. My eyelids shut themselves, only opening again after a substantial time. My breath was short and measured, each individual heartbeat resonating throughout my entire body. In the distance, I could faintly hear the sound like someone tearing a piece of paper. I looked down at the door to my right and saw it begin to buckle. It began to rent and tear, folding itself as one does with laundry. I watched with inexplicable awe as it began to drape itself over my right foot, pinning it to the floor. I became acutely aware of a pain in my right thigh. My mind was trying to keep up with each new sensation, trying to identify and properly place each. My father began to scream something but his voice sounded small and distant. The lines on the road were enormous now, stretching twelve feet. The cars on the road seemed large and foreboding. I could not only count the leaves that spotted the trees but could see the veins coursing through them, as well. I knew that I was screaming but I was deaf to it, the blood in my ears drowning out every outside noise. Total elapsed time: six seconds.

My father disengaged from the crunch and tangle of horrible metal, severing the connection. He slowed his speed, soothing the beast into submission as he pulled over. The pain in my right leg was growing intense now, too intense for me to identify or to scream. I

sat there dumbly, my eyes wide and my jaw agape, frantically waving my arms. As my father pulled into the breakdown lane, the pain became too much and I knew no more.

I woke up in a hospital bed, the smell of antiseptic searing my every sense. My right leg was clad in pristine white bandages. The pain had been reduced to a dull throbbing thanks to the wonders of modern pharmaceuticals. I was in a state of euphoric pain, happily ignorant of my misery and incomprehension. My leg felt dead, as though it was somehow not mine but somebody else's. My eyelids were heavy, my throat thick. I did my best to understand what the nurse tried to tell me but it was for naught.

My father paid his penance a million times over but never forgave himself for my crippled state. The memories of that sticky June day are remembered with every breath that echoes in my lung, with every heartbeat that pounds in my chest, with every day that the weather is cold and my leg throbs. Not a day goes by that I'm not reminded of the events of that June day, in the pure automobile that held such promise. When I close my eyes, I can still see the metal implode on itself. When I lie in bed, I can hear each individual joint and bolt pop and snap as it cracks out of place. When I try to walk, my leg reminds me of the unspeakable pain that engulfed my entire body. No, my father shouldn't be blamed for that accident. But I'll forever remember the longest six seconds of my entire life. One one thousand, two one thousand, three one thousand, four one thousand, five one thousand, six one thousand, pop, the six longest seconds.

*David Esposito, II*

*A  
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o  
n*

Your memories turn tricks upon your mind  
and still you worship them.  
Your past's forsaken you for someone else—  
everyone else—  
but you cannot but cling to it.  
All you've loved hangs from the branches of reality  
You revel in self-sabotage  
and does it work?  
Are you happy?  
Are you satiated?  
Are you bordering on sanity?  
And does nicotine help lessen the bitter taste of truth?  
For envy is such a cross to bear.  
Does it hurt  
To covet that I've forgotten and begun anew  
And you are still addicted to nostalgia?

*~Jane Gurfinkel, I*



## *Late Edition*

Somewhere on the streets of Roslindale is a fifty-year-old man with my sanity in a plastic bag in his backseat. His name is Bill, I think. He delivers the Boston Globe every morning. And he's late.

You see, I like my newspaper first thing in the morning. It's very important that I stay informed on all the latest doings in the world, or at least that I read Fox Trot. Because of time constraints imposed upon me by a system that I dislike and frankly do not understand, I have precious little time to do so in the mornings. The way I figure, I have a nineteen-minute window between the time I drag myself (or am dragged) from my righteous slumber and the time I am treated to a faceful of exhaust and a comfortable space with my cheek pressed against the door of a city bus.

So when PaperMan, as he's called around my house (we either have too much free time or a gas leak), is late, my window shrinks right along with my patience. I futz around the kitchen, trying to make a cup of coffee while mentally (or, much to the delight of everyone in the house trying to sleep, verbally) urging PaperMan on his Santaesque journey up Cummins Highway.

I have time to think at this point. The paper (sports section, then comics, then arts, then metro, then the front page) is what really wakes me up. Before I get my fingers smudged with still-fresh print, you can tell me that flesh-eating bacteria have accidentally been released into my water supply. Oh, I'll nod and smile politely while filling my cup at the sink, but I don't really get it unless it's on the front page, above the fold.

Anyway, I start to wonder who this guy is, this PaperMan. I try to avoid him when I step outside to pick up the paper. This is partly because I have no idea who he really is. He is a stocky fellow with a huge gray walrus moustache and a blue hat. I must have seen him a thousand times since I

learned to read, but I've never been within twenty feet of him. He drives a fairly beat-up sedan (white, I think), and usually has impeccable aim. The other reason we don't converse is that, at 6:00 in the morning, I have no idea who I really am.

People dismiss the sports section as unimportant. Tell that to William Holland. You are, I can tell, giving me a funny look right now. This is because you did not read the Transactions column in the paper the other day, the day it came on time. William Holland was named Nordic Skiing coach at MIT. Really. You didn't even know MIT had a Nordic Skiing team. I see that funny look has returned. Fine, then.

I still don't hear a car slowing in front of my house, so I am led to believe that my football scores will be coming to me at dinner, when the paper is old already.

Everyone has his own little routine about the paper. Andy Rooney says that he can't read the paper if anyone else has touched it, and that he has to read it all at one sitting. Frankly, I think Mr. Rooney needs to get out more. He's forgetting one of the Murphy-esque laws of living with other human beings. Whichever section of the paper the other person is reading is the one that you need. My father is usually up and looking for news too, so we have kind of a system. I grab the sports and comics while he reads the obituaries. He says he wants to know who he's outlived. Maybe he should get out more, too. But I digress. After we've finished our perusing, we stare each other down, kind of like in a bad Western, and switch sections, which is a great plan when the paper is on time, which it is not on this increasingly gloomy-looking morning.

And so, I am left with my own thoughts (ugh) and the prospect of another commute, my face against the glass, oblivious to the world.

~Andrew Barr, III

Once I stumbled upon a block of black  
and examined it

face to face  
from side to side  
with a meticulous eye

insanity is a train with no doors  
I thought

so I tried to touch  
but it felt like solid nothingness  
like vacuums from the nozzle

I heard it  
and it sounded like  
the inescapable ticking of a clock  
or the perpetual dismay of a ringing in one's ear

It tasted like  
church crackers  
or even snow  
and its scent  
was like a basement  
following a flood  
or unhatched eggs

and I tried to figure it out  
but the more I strived for meaning  
the more meaning strived for freedom

and soon  
meaning flew away  
like an emancipated dove  
and all I was left with was  
remnant dust from departure  
and a solitary feather  
that flimsily floated down to me  
teasingly  
rubbing in my confusion  
mocking my state

driving me down  
hammering me into a hole  
a feather and a black box  
equal emptiness.

~Samuel Graham-Felsen, I

Rationale



## *HOLY WAR*

Heads hung low throughout Constantinople that grim day as the effects of the war were setting in, tarnishing the city of gold and luster. The Crusades were fought in an attempt for the Christians to retake the Holy Land. Somehow these religious factors had been forgotten as Christians killed Christians only the day before.

The Venetians were dressed in armor from head to foot. Their garb would have reflected the sunlight had the sun chosen to shine that day. Instead, the gray armor added to the dullness of the day. Each soldier held a sword in the shape of a cross reminding him that God was with him in this battle. The soldiers took to their knees and reverently bowed their heads to their Lord who was supposed to lead them to victory today. On the other side of the rolling green plain were the Byzantines. Just like the Venetians, they wore heavy metallic armor. A priest dressed in flowing black robes stood before them with a gold cross in his right hand and recited a prayer over them all, asking for God's grace in this battle. Neither side bothered to think that their God was listening to both sides' prayers.

When the prayers were over, the Venetian archers stepped forward ceremoniously. A signal was given and the archers aimed their arrows to the sky where only moments before they were aiming their prayers for help and guidance. The archers let loose their arrows with fury and soon a large mass rained on the front line of the Byzantines. Their gray metal armor was dyed red with blood as the arrows penetrated it. Loud cries and wails poured out. Just then, the Byzantine archers took their places and sent a wave of arrows toward the Venetian front line. Now, both sides were drenched with blood, but the battle was only beginning.

The rumbling of an earthquake was felt on the field as the Byzantine and Venetian in-

fantries rushed toward each other. The green grass on the field was uprooted with every step of the charging men. As the armies gained ground on each other the men's eyes first grew large with fear but then they narrowed with anger. A burst of thunder sounded when the armies collided in the center of the field. The soldiers attempted to take the lives of their enemies, who had never done anything to cause such hate and anger; still they all fought with great passion.

The cavalries of the Venetians and the Byzantines soon joined their armies on the battlefield. The militant horses seemed to fight with the same passion as the men as they trampled anyone who was in their way. Whenever a man was thrown from his steed, the battle's end seemed nearer. Man after man hit the ground either shrieking in agony or limp with death. The cross-shaped swords were no longer thought of as protection, but as instruments of torture and death, the same type of torture Jesus had felt when he died on a cross.

The sun descended from the sky and the moon took its place. There was no more movement on the battlefield because the few men who had survived the slaughter had fled in retreat. Christianity had just experienced a civil war and there could be no victor in this battle for the number of fallen Venetian soldiers equaled that of the Byzantines. The dead soldiers rested in seclusion on the battlefield through the night.

It was now late morning but the sky loomed gray once again as the heavens grieved the deaths of their departed followers. The battlefield was painted red with the blood from the fallen soldiers like the color of dead leaves falling from trees. There was a low buzzing of flies swarming on the corpses and swimming through the pools of blood.

Some animals walked through the field

disturbed by the ominous smell of death. The Crusades were supposed to be a Holy War, but there was nothing holy about this sight.

Scattered over the field were peasants clothed in rags. They all kept their faces covered, maybe because the stench was so great, or because they could not face themselves on account of the guilt they felt for stealing from the dead bodies. A few peasants carried long wooden sticks with them so they could tap each body making sure the soldiers were dead before they took their clothing and possessions.

One woman approached a fallen soldier whose eyes were still open. His eyes were a shallow blue but the woman knew that at one time his eyes had been deep with life.

She could not bring herself to take the

gold cross that hung around his neck because his eyes seemed to plead with her to let him be. Lying right next to him was his enemy. Around his neck hung a similar cross, which the woman quickly pocketed.

The day continued its course and that second night found the soldiers half-naked, covered with dirt and dried blood. The sky sent a chilling wind over the bodies and the countryside, toward two young boys standing in a field in front of their home, each holding a stick in hand. They poked and stabbed at each other just as the soldiers had done on the battlefield, but soon the boys grew tired, threw their swords down and crept into their warm wooden home where they went to sleep.

*~Andrew Dubrowski, II*





## *Grandma's in the Kitchen*

Grandma's in the kitchen

fryin' chicken

makin' salad

stuffin' eggplants with breadcrumbs

and shrimp

Grandpa's in charge of the sauce and spaghetti

Mother's sitting on her Deco bed

smokin' a Lucky

drinkin' a bottle of cold # 2 Coke (that was her favorite

before they all started to taste the same)

countin' the dimes, quarters and half dollars

parceled out to her by the Gallivanter

who

was then on his second Eskimo pie in the kitchen above his younger

brother's grocery store in the Vieux Carré

My two younger brothers on Burdette Street playing baseball

I, just home from my payless forty hour a week job

in our Grocery and Bar on Toulouse & Burgundy

where I sold—by force—blackmarket cigarettes, rice, and  
sugar to our black customers (nobody talked about the laws against  
child labor and how it affected a little boy's life

nor of the wounds never to heal)

stood by the new Baby's bed speculated and wondered:

What would become of Nancy Hanks?

Would she become a doctor, lawyer, teacher, opera singer

or Vaudeville tap dancer?

shufflin' back-broken slippers

entered the room

Grandpa

holdin' a white chipped bowl

of chopped spaghetti, sauce, and Parmesan

for the new Baby's initiation

into her

Sicilian Heritage

*~Joseph-Ralph Ruffino*

World Language Department

## *Things Fall Apart*

### *To Honor My Grandfather's Memory*

I always attempt to pump myself up for these visits. This time I am determined not to allow any grief or pity to penetrate the jovial smile fixated upon my face. I spent a good portion of the day looking at pictures of Grandpa and me: pictures of us at Rucker Park, the urban neighborhood of Yonkers, Iraq (the nickname given to a housing project in Manhattan), and Ellis Island as well as places unfamiliar to me and clouded with shrubbery. I will never forget these moments as well as the lessons he gave me on the court. All the moments and lessons that were learned on that court in Queens are priceless and have been stored away for further perusal and contemplation.

As I climb slowly up the ancient stairs, which are flaking with erosion, tears threaten to make their way out of my eyes and course down my cheek.

The door to the foyer of the nursing home hints at what lies beyond the hinged door. The glossy, toned down, yellow paint feels almost wax-like against my skin. The dusty window pane appears to be a portal that would lead me into another realm. A spider is on a bolt busily consuming what appears to be the carapace of a cockroach. My smile has begun to waver, and the wrinkles at the corner of my mouth indicate that a frown is fast approaching.

In the foyer, the dim lighting coincides with the somber tone of the nursing home. The receptionist greets me with a catatonic smile, absent-mindedly handing me a visitor's registration form. The form feels coarse and ruffled as if it were sandpaper. If the form were a hand, it would be calloused. As soon as I have finished filling out the form, a janitor appears and begins mopping up the already immaculate tiled

floor. I have just noticed the floor and realize what a stark contrast it is to the rest of the home. The dopey-faced receptionist is telling me something, but I have heard this before. The shiny floor appears to be coated in enamel and reminds me of my dentist's teeth: shiny, clean and white.

The receptionist finishes delivering her instructions, which has the same tone of a eulogy, but by this time, my face has become neutral. All preparations that were undergone have been to no avail and a wrenching sensation is causing pain in my chest. I walk slowly down the hall, my eyes glued to the floor, all the while wondering, Does he remember me?

When I arrive at the door, I fish the door key out of my pocket and insert it into the door-knob. The door, made of synthetic oak, is very thin, although not easily breakable. The tumblers click and then I turn the knob slowly. Entering the room, I am assaulted by the darkness. I turn and look at my grandfather who is sitting by the window illuminated by the light. His strong gray eyes are fixated on the moving objects below. The thin wisps of gray hair are blowing slowly due to the light breeze in the room. His tough, leathery face is embedded with lines that indicate knowledge. He is propped up in a wheelchair, but the benefits of his salubrious life are evident in his strong grip, ethereal grace, and attentive eyes.

This man taught me everything I know about basketball. On that glass-littered court, with no nets on the rim and bums begging for change, he taught me the lessons of life, through rough basketball games and exhausting training sessions. New York was a tough place and Rucker Park was definitely intimidating, but he prepared me for it and enjoyed himself in the

process. He turned to face me, and our eyes lock. Staring into those powerful gray eyes, I am immediately transported back to those other days in the woods with him teaching me to obey my environment, not to succumb to it. He reaches out and grasps my hand with a crushing grip, but there is no recognition in his eyes. He puckers his lips in a feeble attempt to speak. He is suffering from Alzheimer's disease, and his condition has been deteriorating. The fact that he no longer remembers me is impossible for me to

bear. The tears I was containing spill from me and seep into the thick carpet. I cannot stand to see this great man reduced to ashes and bone in front of my eyes. I flee his room, bumping into the janitor who spills his scalding coffee onto his polyester pants, giving a cry of protest and knocking the receptionist's paper off of her desk but she doesn't notice. I stop and gather my bearings and realize that some things I am not able to handle.

*~Bisi Oyedele, II*



## DEATH PENALTY

A police officer, so young, so brave. Dead.

The victim.

Six bullets to the chest. He died.

The killer: "I need forgiveness,

understanding."

Tears, remorse, the pain of reality. Of death. . .

Coming.

It's coming.

Lawyers appeal to the courts.

What's the use? After months and months of waiting,

My time is up here on earth.

4:00

Two hours before the execution.

A phone from the prison calls her house

An anxious woman.

Tired of all the waiting,

**RR**

**E I**

**TormentedFIED**

picks up the receiver.

A voice says, "Mama, you know I love you."

"SonIwishitwasmetakingyourplace," she cries and cries

A T h o u s a n d t i m e s

I WISH IT WAS ME

"I wouldn't let you," he says.

Forty-five minutes. . .time is running out.

The IV tube, the ceiling, so bright and white.

"I'll ask Allah for forgiveness."

Six feet away, the ceiling again, the clear and heavy glass,

TRANSPARENT

so that you can see the body strapped to the bed.

Only six feet away. . .people are watching me, staring at me;

*This is what they wanted*

*TO SEE,*

*This is what they're going*

*TO GET.*

More time, I need more time.  
Only two more minutes . . .  
You know, I'm not proud of crying, but  
**I'M FINISHED.**

6:10.  
Time is gone.  
The killer: "I know I'm finished."  
The harmful drug, the poison, seeping  
    down,  
    down,  
    down,  
    into        the        veins.  
The pain, the tears, the breath, his last gasp of breath  
I'm gone. . . He's gone. . . I'm finished.

A thought  
of Hope.  
Maybe I'll see him in heaven, to say. . .

I'm sorry.

Two families                    Two sides  
    s    ff    r    ng  
    u    e    i  
    s    ff    r    ng,  
The grief shared so painfully.

A mother's agony  
(revenge)

A mother's sorrow  
(regret)

Lights out, ladies and gentlemen,  
The doctor has turned off the lights—  
The murderer has left the room.

Two killers.  
Two victims.

**Justice?**

*~Sabrina Acloque, II*

## *The Sheriff's Lesson Learned Too Late*

A forest in silver at the top of the King Fool's Hill holds the secret to the Jester's bells. And the common inevitables say that the Grandfather Tortoise lives up on the bell curve guarding the chimes and leather scented books and spectacles and sewing needles as he watches the fortunate inevitables wonder and walk. But the sheriff, jealous that no one wonders at him, challenges the old turtle to a duel saying, 'I am the rightful watcher of the Thimble Sky!' But the wise old head inside a shell sees that the sheriff lies and gives him an apple to do the silly bidding meant only for those who scream to listen. He orders him, "Go into the forest and bring this red shiner to the Most Elaborate Peanut Brittle Fairy." And so, the sheriff goes with ice cream in his heart, eager to please the magic bells that guard over the tortoise's inevitables.

The trees are covered with purple leaves, a sure sign that playful bridges are flying back. The sheriff drops his prized ticket to the top of the hill to go and frolic in the purple leaves, waiting around so he can tickle the giddy bridges and fly with them to the magic place in the Thimble Sky where turtles get their magic.

But the ice cream melts and he drops from the air into the cauldron of the Most Elaborate Peanut Brittle Fairy, a respectable grandmother elf who favors handkerchiefs over diamonds, and loyal baker to the King Fool. An upside-down frown creeps onto her face as she asks the sheriff in a voice as sugary as insane, "Have you brought me an apple to solve the puzzle in my lively bubbles?" The sheriff, hiding his fate and seeking a path, brushes her aside yelling, "I have to find my rightful bridges and jump over the moon now, you cow!" Before he could swing out of the pot, Peanut's flaming rage swims from her eyes and into her bubbles, which makes the sheriff feel a little woozy, and then a little well done. Peanut pokes him with a fork and exclaims, "My fork runs dry, what a tough cookie he'd be for just desserts!" Then she calls the agreeable wind to carry her bubbles to the King Fool's court as she floats alongside with her chocolate covered Peanut Wings.

At her springish arrival she is greeted by the entire deck of the King Fool, who presents to her an invisible cube that holds a thimble to the sky and a cloak made from purple leaves for her wind to wear in blissful ignorance. When all formalities are done, the King hops onto his high horse and asks, "Where is my apple stew made for the Feast of Livid Delights?" And so, Peanut opens the pot and gives the King his crisp surprise. "When all is said and done," points the King with a foil scepter, "I do not like rough times enough for this. Give it to the scrounging doggies." Then the fifty-two jittered while the dogs ate an authoritative meal and the Most Elaborate Peanut Brittle Fairy floated home to where her hearts are. The Grandfather Tortoise took a turn tickling with his sweet bells and bridges, as he tip-toed to his place to watch and sing for the Fool King up in the inevitables' Thimble Sky.

*~Gina Cappellano, II*





## ***His House***

I can only recall the good days  
of dust motes glorified by sun shafts,  
frogs in the swimming pool,  
lazily sun blocking my bare belly with a Klondike bar,  
and drowning in his water bed  
under a heated blanket.

At night moths would accompany his  
palm reading sessions while  
newspaper planes sent his visions to  
the cryptic cosmos.

We thought we could dig for water in the  
front yard on Honeywell Street  
with dirty fingernails.  
But we never got that deep.

Autumn eventually fell.  
I whistled silently  
with acorns into his ears.  
The seasons called,  
the clouds burst  
and he watched  
as his rainbow trail  
washed and warmed me.

*~Aparna Majmudar, I*

## *Cause and Effect: Streams of Life*

"I haven't talked to you for so long."

"I know. There's just no time."

The excuse of junior year,

the homework,

the endless activities to make us "well-rounded individuals"

(on a piece of paper)

and the lack of sleep

had become our excuse,

our reason for not spending time with each other anymore.

But that's not the real reason.

And I'm not even sure if I know

WHY

Her experience this summer?

My inability to keep up the past tradition of calling every night?

Our (seemingly ever-conflicting) schedules?

It seemed as if we were traveling down two different streams,

with the current pulling us in different directions.

Activity,

getting out of her house,

something, anything, going on,

a party,

a group of friends (more laughs, more possibilities).

Distraction was pulling her away from me.

Comfort,

being in a familiar place,

control of MY life (not the tired, work-driven one my teachers had planned for me),

A friend (singular since I don't like big groups as much anymore),

My own quiet happiness was pulling me away from her.

And she perhaps found

comfort and

control and

friends and

happiness

but not with me.

And I had found them

without her.

My sadness does not spring from

here; I'm more content knowing she's happier with someone else  
than unhappy with me.

My sadness wants to spring from

my inability to comfort her, to be the one that could help  
(but that's not my fault I remind myself, I shouldn't have to  
change into someone I'm not).

My sadness, like much of the longing types of sadness in life, springs from  
a place where memories of  
childhood afternoons,  
longing touches,  
first loves and  
old friends linger.  
These streams can only run through my veins,  
Innocence no longer carries me down the river;  
I have taken over the job.

The streams that run through us are all different  
and have led us to choose different rivers.  
Maybe one day she and I will meet up,  
and go for a boat ride together,  
only it will have to be on a different journey.  
The change in the current that made us part was silent;  
not painful like a hurricane,  
but not painless,  
like how a change in the moon turns tides.

The cause to many of life's natural disasters is simple:  
We grow up.

~Anonymous



Let me be a ghost, the present gets hazy. I'd shed these mortal constraints, then you with the night  
would wrap me in a blanket of starry blue I could then be found once more while catching you so  
Possess. My inescapable moon (listen & watch & bathe but no matter how much arms flail, cannot touch)  
sighs over me, stalking the moonlit evening, I never let you down with lowering, all-knowing eyes. The door way to a thousand...  
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rebecca ferris

aparna majmudar

jonah goldstein

sarah colvario

megan halligan

andrea alessi

irene kopitov

jane gurfinkel

irene kopitov

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samuel graham-felson

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manu pradhan

andrea alessi

selena tang

megan halligan

andrea alessi

megan halligan

irene kopitov

andrea alessi

amy erlandson

sarah colvario

jonah goldstein

andrea alessi

mike tran

selena tang

manu pradhan

andrea alessi

andrea alessi

aparna majmudar

Memorizing face. Holding my quivering chin, whispering, "Crying is forbidden  
[there is] only now."  
Losing before time would allow me to fully have. Thrown overboard into the Marmara Sea.  
"I will swim there, whether the ocean is cold or hot, I am always hot of your love."



